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A Study of the Education Program  
at the Massachusetts Reformatory

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## Foreword

In a study of the Education Program at the Massachusetts Reformatory it must be clearly understood that this institution has not been definitely organized as a place of reform for carefully selected inmates. Originally it was built as a maximum security prison and only when crowded conditions demanded was it used in any measure as a setting for rehabilitation work. Even today, in the words of our Commissioner of Correction, this institution is more a prison than a reformatory. Very little attempt is made at classification. All types of criminals and delinquents are sent to the Reformatory with varying records and sentences. The good are mixed with the bad and the net result, while still as good as the average reformatory, is far below the standard that should be demanded by a progressive society.

Since punishment and rehabilitation exist side by side it has made it impossible to consider the institution as all prison or all reformatory. In comparisons that I have made with other organizations I have felt justified in using both types of places as they have fitted my needs in related activities. Adult education whether in a prison or reformatory has the objective of rehabilitation and so may be successfully compared as to organization, methods, successes and failures.



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword

Chapter	Page
I Introduction . . . . .	3
II Massachusetts Reformatory. . . . .	7
III Experiments and Research . . . . .	17
IV Academic and Vocational Rehabilitation . .	31
V Other Educational Agencies . . . . .	54
VI Progress in Reformation. . . . .	65
VII Conclusion . . . . .	73
Bibliography . . . . .	86





## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

In the field of professional or social endeavor, just as in other realms of life, it is the perplexing problem that arouses our greatest interest--that tempts us to make our greatest effort to find a solution. It is the difficult and not the easy task that puts us on our mettle. The rehabilitation of the criminal is no simple problem and so offers itself as one of the most complicated challenges in our social and educational progress.

We often hear crime discussed from the standpoint of its prodigious cost. An idea of the tremendous financial total involved can be gained by merely pondering some of the burdens imposed upon individuals and groups by efforts to prevent crime and by losses sustained from it. The National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement estimates after careful analysis that,"--the average per capita cost of administering the criminal law in American cities over 25,000 in population is approximately \$5.39 per year; and the total expenditure for approximately 75 per cent of the 365 cities of this size, including 63.5 per cent of the urban population of the country, is over \$247,700,000 per year".<sup>1</sup> Even this incomplete estimate is sufficient to indicate that the cost of a thorough program of crime prevention is likely to be comparatively small as compared to the billions of dollars of loss sustained through

1. National Committee on Law Observance and Enforcement, Bulletin No. 12, "The Cost of Crime" (1931), p. 323.



the persistence of law violation.

The American tradition of individualism is undoubtedly one of the more general social influences which explain the widespread disregard of law in this country. The United States originated in rebellion against English law. The natural-rights doctrine, expressed in the Declaration of Independence, arose in a period when men throughout Europe and America were searching for a justification for revolution. The idea that men are endowed with certain natural, inalienable rights which emanate from a source above the social group and the law, seems to justify certain illegal acts in the minds of some individuals, especially when they are under the stress of great emotion. We see this tendency to take the law into individual hands in lynching parties and in extra-legal societies which sometimes terrorize wide areas in our country. It is especially necessary that a large proportion of the people of this nation understand that our highest ethical principles can be made effective through the law more easily than outside of it.

The rapidity of social change is another influence which bears upon the extent of criminality. The rapid growth of the city furnishes an excellent illustration. Of the offenders committed to state and federal prisons and reformatories in 1938, more than three times as many were committed from cities as from rural districts. The tempo of rapidly changing modern life is nervously disorganizing and offers increased opportunities for crime,--tearing men away from old group inhibitions





and control. Family disorganization also is undoubtedly a contributing factor of major importance to anti-social behavior, particularly to juvenile delinquency. Studies of delinquent groups indicate that from 40 to 70 per cent of the children involved come from broken homes. Divorce or separation of parents, death of one or both parents, alcoholism, immorality, constant irritation and bickering, working mothers, lack of parental supervision and extreme harshness of parents may all contribute to the social maladjustment which starts a child on a career of delinquency. Quite often these delinquent groups become the source of new recruits for the ranks of adult criminals. A normal home environment seems to be vital to the building of well-balanced personalities, capable of making a normal adjustment to society.

Economic insecurity, though possibly overemphasized by some, is clearly a general influence contributing heavily to criminal behavior. Extreme want in a population where there is ostentatious display of luxury tends to build attitudes of resentment and provoke reflection upon ways of obtaining "easy" money. Periods of industrial crisis, when unemployment is general, witness sharp increases in crime. Finally, the individual who is reared in poverty is more likely to feel that he has much to gain and little to lose, in the way of social status and self-respect, by an attempt to make money through criminal activity.

It is clear that back of every offense against the law there are social influences which throw light upon it. Some



social situations appear to act as incentives to crime; others offer opportunity; and still others school youth in delinquent attitudes.

Society is moving toward a better understanding of the view that criminals are erring human beings who have failed as members of normal social groups. Modern democratic and humanitarian sentiment would not long tolerate extensive use of brutal and socially degrading actions in the name of justice. Penalties with the idea of revenge are now inconsistent with the modern scientific approach to problems dealing with legal offenders against society. Contemporary scientific procedure, in so far as it has been adopted, rests upon a combination of the theories of reformation, protection, and prevention. It includes the reformation of those offenders who are capable of regeneration, the segregation of those mentally deficient and an extensive use of the scientific knowledge of physicians, psychologists, psychiatrists, and sociologists in preventing crime and reconstructing the misguided personalities of the criminal.

The application of measures of rehabilitation, based on examinations by experts is gradually being substituted for guesswork about offenders now made in an atmosphere so conducive to fear and resistance as to make the guesses mostly unsound. A practical plan requires men of a type and training not now available in sufficient numbers. These men should have a thorough understanding of the problems of the inmate and





should be equipped to guide and instruct him in his renewed effort to find his place in society. It is now quite generally agreed that the treatment of men in prisons is essentially an educational problem in its broadest sense. Criminality evidently originates in the human mind and should be checked at its source. In fact the prison can protect society only by reconstructing the man sent to them. The prison should cure or keep the persistent wrongdoer.

While in a broad sense the whole prison should be a school of character, and all its activities directed toward a common end--the improvement of the inmates in body, mind, and soul--the school proper is especially charged with the duty of creating an atmosphere in the prison favorable to reformation. It is confronted with a spiritual rather than a material problem. It is a mental and moral repair shop rather than an industrial factory. The chief function is to salvage lives that have drifted off the beaten path of social acceptance. Unfortunately very few institution leaders have understood this necessary attitude toward the problem and today in most prisons we find a hodgepodge of attempts in all fields mainly emphasizing the vocational side of rehabilitation and in only a few cases an enlightened system based on the wider scope of fundamental educational responsibility for reform.



## CHAPTER II

### Massachusetts Reformatory

According to the "Annotated Law of Massachusetts" the correction institution at Concord was established to "--be the reformatory prison for the commonwealth in which all male persons under the age of thirty convicted of crime in the courts of the commonwealth or of the United States, and duly sentenced or removed thereto, shall be imprisoned and detained in accordance with the sentences or orders of said courts and the rules and regulations of said reformatory."<sup>1</sup> However, it was originally built to replace the State Prison at Charlestown and was occupied as a State Prison from 1878 until 1884. At about that time the leading penologists of the State and others interested in the reformation of youthful offenders felt that a separate institution for their care and treatment was needed and the above act establishing the Massachusetts Reformatory was approved by Governor Robinson in 1884.

When the reformatory was first started, sentences were not subject to limitation in respect to age, offence, or number of commitments. This resulted in much inconsistency on the part of the courts in sentencing persons to this institution, as men of fifty were committed by the same court that would sentence a boy of sixteen, and apparently no officials saw the necessity of discriminating between the persons who should be sent to the reformatory. A few years after it was opened, the

1. Annotated Laws of Massachusetts, Vol. IV, Michie Co., Charlottesville, Va., 1933.





indeterminate sentence was adopted, and at the same time the age limit of forty years was established. The age limit of forty years remained in effect until September 1, 1928, when it was reduced to thirty years by Chapter 28 of the Acts of 1928. Today, by means of improvements which have been made through the years, the reformatory is equipped for the training of any prisoner amenable to reform.

The physical plant of the reformatory consists of a single unit of brick buildings enclosed by a high retaining wall. There are also about 325 acres of farm land outside of the wall plus a farm dormitory to house those inmates who are being gradually schooled to more outside freedom in anticipation of their pending releases. Fronting on a main highway is the double residence of the superintendent, and the assistant superintendent, together with the administrative office. These open into a reception and central guard room from which extend the three cell blocks housing approximately one thousand prisoners. From this guard room access may be had to all parts of the institution with the exception of the hospital and industrial buildings which are separate structures within the walls.

At the present time there are over one thousand inmates of various types incarcerated here for rehabilitation. One hundred and sixty of these are men originally sentenced to State Prison but who were transferred because of overcrowded conditions. These are quite hardened in comparison to the



general reformatory type and have sentences of from three to thirty years. This group in itself, by association with the rest, make the guidance work of the institution a much more difficult problem. The following table will acquaint one with the penal experiences and possibilities of reform among the inmates.

State Prison transfers . . .	160	<sup>1</sup> .
3rd Commitments . . . . .	245	
2nd Commitments . . . . .	310	
1st Commitments . . . . .	300	

With this enrollment as a foundation the Warden and his staff are expected to provide conditions most favorable for the development of a motivating force in the hearts of criminals that will impel them to change their outward social actions. The institution is charged with protecting society and salvaging the men entrusted to it.

In spite of the wide divergence of criminal types and the great differences in the length of sentences, the reformatory organization goes to work on the rehabilitation problem of all. The entire personnel,--the warden, guards, teachers, psychiatrist, social workers, physician, chaplain and shop instructors all pitch in to guide and act as motivating agents in the educational program. In the cases of both the institution's academic and vocational organizations, the curriculum and methods of instruction rest on the basic assumption that the major purpose is correction. The justification of their value is in what they contribute

1. Reformatory records May 1939.





ultimately to the re-fashioning of individual character and to the adjustment of unsettled personalities. In order to return good citizens to Massachusetts society all agencies of the institution become part of the educational program for reform.

Unfortunately there is every reason to believe that this institution has failed in its primary function of reform. The probable extent of this failure was brought to the attention of the public by the Gluecks when they published their notable book, " 500 Criminal Careers ". The important fact established in this book was that out of 510 men who left the Massachusetts Reformatory during the years 1911-22, eighty per cent were not reformed five to fifteen years later,<sup>1</sup> but went right on committing crimes after their discharge. It is probably safe to say that today we could scale this figure down considerably but in the light of the commitments already tabulated it is obvious that the recidivists are still the largest group in the census of the population of the reformatory.

In recognizing the failure of the institution to reform we must remember that the average inmate has already been given up by all other agencies of society. His family, church, school, and fellow associates have turned him over as an outcast. This would indicate that the reformatory has started with an almost hopeless case. By his very nature the inmate is inclined to be unstable, unresponsive, and apathetic toward good influences. He is usually indifferent to benefits that can be derived only by hard work and steady application. He is

1. Glueck, Sheldon and Eleanor, 500 Criminal Careers.  
New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1930.



prone to be hostile to education because the recollection of his school days, usually unsuccessful, is fresh in his mind. He looks on education as merely another form of penal routine. He often shows to his fellow prisoners and his officers a front of indifference, recklessness and an attitude of resignation that practically defies correction. I have often heard prisoners make the statement that they always expect to be "crooks". It is only fair to state, however, that all the responsibility for failure in this respect does not rest on the shoulders of the inmate or the reformatory. It is almost unanimously agreed upon by the prisoners that society does not give them a chance to go straight when they are once branded as ex-convicts. It is human nature to avoid relationships with men who have been in prison. Society scorns them after they are released. Jobs are scarce and they are left to their own devices. Influenced by hate and distrust they soon revert to their old habits and are eventually caught and taken back to prison for further reforming. Society must help to reestablish these men if it wishes them to become respectable and dependable again. The foregoing is probably one of the greatest causes of recidivism at the Massachusetts Reformatory.

In spite of the fact that the prevention of the contamination of the less criminal prisoners by those more experienced in crime is one of the first essentials in prison treatment, the policy of transferring from one institution to another is generally used for the relief of overcrowded





conditions in Massachusetts. Many men who were originally sent to State Prison are now included among the reformatory inmates. Very little segregation is attempted and we find that these men automatically become the secondary teachers in schooling the first offenders in new methods of committing crimes. Experience has shown them to be the most daring in violation of institution rules and to be the leaders in creating unrest and agitation within the walls. They assume an attitude of worldliness that cannot help but influence the beginners to look to them for advice on reformatory and prison life in addition to new methods of "beating the cops" on the outside. These invaders from the "big house", as they so proudly call it, are ever on the alert to find fault with the institution. They compare the meals, working hours, pay, and general treatment in such a way that the newer men soon react by carrying a secret dissatisfaction and a positive resistance to voluntary cooperation in the solution of their own problems. The deleterious effect of this relationship practically defeats the aim of the organization.

It is a difficult task to read the minds of men who through the years have developed a class loyalty that seldom allows them to confide in a law abiding person. From general observation it is discernible that they consider themselves thoroughly capable in most cases. They know they must serve a definite sentence and have little desire to work any more than necessary. They become "prison wise" and learn to be



prison politicians,--obtaining the easy jobs and getting the little favors that seem so important to them. The guards, deputies, instructors and social workers are accepted as necessary evils and as for academic schooling they have the attitude that they are too old or too settled in life to turn the pages back that far. It is the common complaint that "we had all that stuff back in grade school". It is seldom admitted, however, that they failed in their academic work in the elementary schools of their respective cities. The following table based on the figures of the Glueck study of 450 of these inmates definitely shows their shortcomings in previous educational achievement.

Grade reached	Percentage <sup>1.</sup>
Never attended school	2.4
5th grade or less	42.6
6th to 8th grade	45.6
9th grade	4.6
High school (1 or more years)	4.4
Complete high school	.2

Even though the need for education is obviously great, evening academic schooling is so objectional in their thoughts that their reaction to the work is practically the same as any shortsighted grade school youngster who attends the sessions from fear of the unknown results of the alternative. In some cases school is looked forward to as an excuse to leave their cells for a few hours. They always seem to be happy, however, when the bell rings for the end of the session.

The daily routine of vocational education, shop and

1. Glueck, Sheldon and Eleanor, 500 Criminal Careers. (New York), p. 132.



maintenance work likewise offers itself as a situation to be reacted to by the inmates in everything but a desirable way. Experience has shown that very few are engaged in the trades they learn here when they are released, so that the purpose seems to be to obtain an easy job while in the institution. Short hours, inferior standards and lack of responsibility all have a part in creating the slipshod, easy-going "line of least resistance" effort put forth by the men.

It is only fair to say, however, that in spite of the general attitude as set forth above many of the prisoners are sincere in their interests and by cooperating give hope that more and more will be infected with the desire to learn and improve themselves and so justify the existence and aims of the reformatory.

### The Question of Responsibility

A thorough consideration of the type of individual that is included in the general run of the reformatory population leaves little doubt in the minds of those interested that the major portion of the material is unreclaimable. The recidivists and state prison transfers do more harm than good. The general attitude of the group as a whole, based on ignorance and limited environments, is so great a deterring force that the working of any educational program among them is almost impossible. The responsibility of society in creating this group through its jealous retention of class superiority and





its social and economic group favoritism cannot be condoned.

Without question the personnel of the institution could be greatly improved. Better qualified teachers could be obtained. More modern methods of instruction could be instituted. Fewer members in any one class would certainly give more individual benefits to each inmate. Many courses, both vocational and academic, could and should be added to the program. Even the hours given to school could be increased so that all teachers and classes could be on a full daytime basis. With all these additions there would be a corresponding increase in the success of the institution. No one will deny that they all should be tried if they mean the difference between men going out to live honestly in society or preying upon it for a livelihood. The one catch to this solution is the ever present one of the cost. Society expects miracles but doesn't provide the means of obtaining them. Taxes are taxes regardless of their purpose and the only interest people have in them is in their reduction. The reformation of criminals seems to be a distasteful subject. The maintenance of an institution for their incarceration is the end of responsibility for society in this direction. It forgets that those same criminals must come back to them eventually. It doesn't concern itself with the fact that the tremendous cost of crime makes any expenditure for prevention and control a good investment. If the penologists of Massachusetts were allowed to run their departments and institutions without the necessity of catering to



politicians for funds and security I am sure that most of them would attack this problem scientifically, revising and adjusting with the best men and methods possible and so return to the state in social value far more than will ever be had under the present system.





## CHAPTER III

### Experiments and Research

Both from within and without correctional circles there comes the reiterated call for an evaluation of the procedures, both old and new, that are being employed in the reformatories and penal institutions of our country. At one time, the prison is hailed as society's invaluable weapon against crime; in the next breath, it is denounced as an incubator of delinquency, significant in its failure to accomplish its fundamental purpose, the reformation of its inmate population.

Even in official discussions, from the mouths of legislators and judges, there issues conflicting arguments concerning the desirability of the newer penal procedures. It is very evident, however, in all discussions of this nature, that the scientific investigation and research being carried on will be successful in clearing the confused attempts of prisons to reform and will set forth new educational procedures that will release society entirely from the problem of rehabilitation. The criminologist, the penologist, and their invaluable co-workers, the physician, the psychiatrist, the psychologist, the educator and the social worker have accepted the goal of rehabilitation as the highest objective of their work.

In the light of the above goal many experiments and researches have been made by these men. While much data are



still needed the prison groups have been investigated, tested and experimented with extensively, and we are gradually storing up information as a basis for sound reformation standards for the future. In spite of this, a very pessimistic attitude concerning our knowledge of criminology has been taken by Professors Michael and Adler of the School of Law of Columbia University as they maintain that there is no scientific knowledge in the field of criminology. They claim, as a result of a survey which they made, that we have no knowledge of the causes of criminal behavior or of the effects of different modes and varieties of treatment upon actual or potential offenders. They recommend the establishment of an Institute of Criminology to conduct intensive researches to form the basis of a science of criminology. I am of the opinion that conditions of investigation in this field are not quite as bad as suggested. Indeed we do not know all that we should about the cause of crime, but we can certainly point to very evident situations and occurrences in the life development of most delinquents to turn to as a basis either of preventive or corrective effort. There is no one cause of crime, and there is no one remedy for all delinquent conditions. Consequently, intelligent treatment, preventive or corrective, educational or re-educational, must be based upon a foundation of complete knowledge of the person's make-up and of his developmental history. Intensive, intelligent, scientifically controlled case studies are now being carried on by competent staffs of



psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers. Scientific data, in itself, will not correct human maladjustments, but out of the findings of these studies practical programs of treatment in the hospital, in the school, in the workshop and recreational centers will develop.

In December, 1933, Governor Lehman of New York appointed a commission for the study of education in penal institutions. This group was headed by Dr. N.L. Engelhardt, of Teacher's College and had for its other members such well known men as Edward P. Mulrooney, Commissioner of Correction, State of New York; Sam A. Lewisohn, State Commissioner of Correction, New York City; Austin H. MacCormick, Commissioner, Department of Correction of the City of New York; William E. Grady, Associate Superintendent of Schools, New York City, and Dr. J. Cayce Morrison of the State Education Department at Albany. In promoting a comprehensive and vital program of education in correctional institutions, the Commission had only one thought in mind;--the protection of the public interests. They decided that in order to accomplish the desired socialization of the inmate the educational program should have the following objectives:--It must have a well-rounded, integrated program of activities to enlist the sincere interest and effort of inmates. It must modify their attitudes and behavior patterns, and provide them with the techniques, knowledges, and understandings necessary for the maintenance of a desirable standard of living upon release. Activities leading to





clearer understandings of modern social and economic problems must be offered in order to bring about revision of undesirable attitudes toward social institutions. The Commission advocated a continuous program of research and experimentation to determine the values of procedures and materials, and recognized the value which psychometric and other tests provide as aids in diagnosing a prisoner's needs and in planning a program for him. The work of the Commission was scientific and sound and speaks well for the efforts toward progress in rehabilitation work in this field.

#### Massachusetts

In 1931 a Division of Investigation in the Department of Correction was organized in Massachusetts, and a staff was appointed composed of a director, and five competent and experienced investigators. It was agreed that the files of the Department of Correction and the institutions under its control did not contain information suitable for scientific research, and that the greatest contribution the Division could make would be to gather and organize into case histories relevant information on persons committed to the state correctional institutions which could be used both for purposes of administration and research. The staff was assigned to the State Prison and comprehensive case histories have been compiled on all inmates committed to that institution since September, 1931. On October 1, 1933, a staff was organized at the Massachusetts Reformatory, and



since that date case histories comparable to those compiled on State Prison inmates have been prepared on persons admitted to the Reformatory. The case histories have included an official version of the offense for which the inmate was committed, the inmate's own version of the offense, his complete criminal record in this and other states, a statement of his family background, a detailed personal history of the inmate from his birth to the time of his commitment, including his educational record, employment history, delinquencies, marital history and all other information which would give a better understanding of the man. Also included is his health history with a report of the medical examination made at the time of admission, and his mental history with any reports of previous mental examinations plus the report of the prison psychiatrist and psychologist. The history proper is followed by a brief summary which includes a statement of the problems presented by the inmate, a tentative prognosis, and a suggested program of treatment while under the custody of the department. These case histories have furnished a basis for individual treatment in the institutions, for classification and transfer between institutions, for the deliberations of the parole board and for the parole agents in the supervising of men released on parole. As these histories accumulate in the files of the Department of Correction, they will become available for the use of the courts in sentencing those who later commit crimes and also will furnish a new basis for research which, until now, has





not been available.

The research carried on by Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck<sup>1</sup> in this state is also worthy of consideration in the scientific treatment of prisoners. They showed after a careful collection and analysis of statistics that the Massachusetts Reformatory failed in eighty per cent of the cases studied, to do what it was meant to do. It did not reform men, as they continued their criminal careers after release, though not quite so actively as before. This piece of work by the Gluecks is the first time that anyone has made a serious effort to find out whether our reformatories are accomplishing what they are intended to accomplish. Some of the conclusions that have been drawn from their collection of statistics and information are that the families of the inmates of the Reformatory were very inferior in comparison to the general population. Over half of the families of the prisoners had an official record of arrest or commitment for various offences prior to the sentence of the inmate studied, and thirty per cent of the families had members who were delinquent and criminal, but who for some reason had not been arrested. Fifteen per cent of the families were dependent economically and almost sixty per cent were in marginal circumstances. In only thirteen per cent of the cases had one or both parents attended the public schools. Of the offenders themselves over eighty per cent had left the parental home prior to sentence to the Reformatory. It was shown that they had many demoralizing habits and vices;--were

1. Glueck, Sheldon and Eleanor, "500 Criminal Careers." New York, 1930, and "Later Criminal Careers." Brattleboro, Vt., 1937.



retarded in education and became delinquent and criminal in action at very early ages in their careers. The influence of the Reformatory on them was determined and the following findings stood out: The institution had no effect in improving the conduct of thirty-six per cent of the men. Together with the parole system and perhaps other favourable outside influences, it did have good effect in another thirty-six per cent of the cases. It was found that the Reformatory's efforts were much more successful with young men who were skilled workers upon commitments, who had been meeting their economic obligations and who had had no previous penal experience. Correlation of individual factors in the pre-Reformatory, Reformatory, parole, and post-parole careers of the men indicated that success or failure in the period after parole depended upon the nature of the pre-Reformatory habits of the men, their criminal or non-criminal conduct while on parole, the nature of their family attitude during the post-parole period, the quality of their post-parole work habits, and whether or not they were meeting their economic responsibilities to the family and utilizing their leisure time constructively or not. On the basis of the findings of the Gluecks it should be possible to construct prognostic instruments for the use of judges and agencies concerned with the scientific treatment and rehabilitation of offenders against society.

Elmira

The New York State Commission to Investigate Prison



Administration and Construction is sponsoring the reorganization of the Elmira Reformatory academic and trade schools as a first step toward a better system of education in the penal institutions of that state. This progressive step was prompted as a result of the research of Austin H. MacCormack<sup>1</sup> in which he pointed out two basic requirements for effective educational work: -- instruction must be individualized; -- and it must challenge adult interests at various levels of achievement. The aim of the reorganization program is the social and industrial rehabilitation of each inmate at the highest level possible for one of his innate capacity. For this purpose the educational work had been closely integrated with the recently reorganized Classification Clinic. Members of the educational staff are also members of the classification committee and educational assignments are based on the results of the classification studies.

As a means of discovering special interests in the vocational opportunities of the institution, new inmates are taken on a tour of all the shops and maintenance details during their first week in the institution. Each man is asked to list his preferences in order and these are taken into consideration in deciding upon his assignment. Final assignments are made when the new inmate leaves the classification clinic to take his place in the general population. In making the vocational assignments the following factors are considered: -- social, psychiatric, and

1. MacCormack, Austin H., "The Education of Adult Prisoners." New York, The National Society of Penal Information, 1931.





psychological data obtained by the clinic; -- the inmates interests as shown by his expressed preferences; -- the possibilities of placement after release from the institution; -- the size of the group already enrolled in any particular assignment; -- and the maintenance needs of the institution. Academic school placement is decided in the light of psychological and achievement tests. The curriculum tentatively adopted included, English, Mathematics, Social Science, Health, General Science, Cultural appreciations and Ethics. In order to provide the necessary individualized teaching, instruction is of the project type. Grade lines have been abolished and the division as a whole is separated into eight groups, according to intelligence ratings. Classroom procedure is adapted from the Dalton and Winnetka plans. In place of providing each member of the group with the same text book in each subject, a variety of text books and source material is located in the classrooms. The instructors prepare courses consisting of unit projects building up toward an objective which is determined by the needs and abilities of the individual. The projects outlined for one inmate in any subject may be different from the projects assigned to the inmate who sits next to him in the same class, depending upon the vocational assignment, special interests, or special needs of each boy.

Teaching is in terms of supervision, guidance, and assistance in self-direction. Pupils may select any necessary



text books or source material from the shelves to use in completing a project, and they are always free to ask the instructor for his help. Completed projects are handed in to be corrected and are returned to the pupils with specific suggestions and constructive criticism.

In the field of vocational education, three shops have been organized on a demonstrational basis. The shop work takes the form of trade courses based on standard trade analyses worked out by the State Department of Education and some of the leading vocational schools. The revised trade courses provide for a definite tie-up between the academic subjects pertaining to each trade and the shop work. Shop work like school work, consists of a series of projects and each boy advances from one project to the next as rapidly as he can master the first. The projects are practical and consist of operations and jobs which workmen are called upon to do in following the trade outside the institution. This procedure has the effect, at least, of revitalizing the work and making it more practical and interesting.

The Elmira experiment emphasizes the importance of using modern scientific techniques and trained personnel. Most institutions waste time, energy, and money by haphazard procedures in placement and assignment of men to educational programs. It is still too soon to be able to evaluate this experiment but it is safe to say that considerable improvement in elimination of recidivism can be expected from such a



scientific individualistic method of handling the reformatory education of inmates.

#### Other Investigations and Experiments

In June, 1934, Robert Martin<sup>1.</sup> wrote of a project being carried on at the Federal Penitentiary on McNeil's Island in the state of Washington. Here we find that a system similar to that of Elmira has been organized. Determination of the prisoner's educational level is made with standardized tests and he is then allowed to choose courses in the school system. His vocational work is allotted if possible according to his own choice. Inmates conduct the evening schools and the classes are optional and well attended. Every indication points to self-interest being created and the desire to learn being instilled as a voluntary activity.

August Aichhorn<sup>2.</sup> tackled the problem of delinquency through the medium of psychoanalysis. In his investigation he gave us a step by step analysis of the symptoms of delinquency through the underlying causes to the ultimate transference and reform of the individual. The application of psychology to the socially unadjusted was stressed by him as an important factor in reform procedure. Re-education in social contact seemed to be the primary need for changing the latent complex of the offender into a normal behavior pattern. In a similar study by Joseph Roucek<sup>3.</sup> at Rock View Farm Prison, experiments were conducted in preparing paroled men for the outside world. The

1. Martin, Robert Ray, "Education in the Prison without Walls". School and Society, V.39, p.704-706, June 1934.

2. Aichhorn, August, "Wayward Youth". Canada, Macmillan, 1935.

3. Roucek, Joseph Slabey, "Experiment in Adult Education at Rock View Farm Prison". School and Society, V.42, p.199-200. Aug. 1935.





goal of the educational preparation was the teaching of the fundamentals of social problems and the obtaining of a sense of balance in the matter of self-respect and desirable social attitudes. It was found that much could be accomplished in this type of rehabilitation if the classes were small and if the confidence of the group could be obtained. The experiment showed that most members of the group responded to common sense material in the course and seemed ready to profit by their new understandings of "societal" relationships. Well prepared classes in pre-parole instruction from the day of incarceration would go a long way toward making the prison term a period of adjustment from the artificial life of the institution to the normal life in a community.

On the basis of information gathered concerning reformatory inmates, Ingram Beresford, in an article on prison education,<sup>1</sup> drew the conclusion that attempts to change prisoners by the ordinary objectives of education is doomed to failure. They have become immune to this by their school experiences of the past. Any material used in institution classes must be carefully chosen and analyzed in the light of the desires, needs, and interests of the inmates. Current events, travel, literature, and drama are wise choices because they have the power to arouse new interests so necessary if the spark of volition is to have a rebirth. Success is almost inversely proportional to the decrease in moralizing lectures, which have been used so often in the past. If truth is to gain a

1. Beresford, Ingram, "Education in Prisons." Adult Education, Vol.10, p.33-39, Sept. 1937.



foothold in the minds of the inmates, it must be discovered by them indirectly and not forced into their brain by over-zealous reformers.

One of the best known scientists of penology is Austin MacCormick, the author of "The Education of Adult Prisoners". In an article written for the Journal of Adult Education in 1936<sup>1</sup> he made a comprehensive survey of all the prisons and adult reformatories in the country. He found the general picture until 1930 quite black. There wasn't a single, complete, well-rounded educational program adequately staffed and financed up until this time. The renaissance started in 1930 when the federal prison system set an example for all American institutions by installing trained educators in its prisons and reformatories. Soon after this the American Prison Association established a permanent committee on education and the American Library Association began to cooperate in research and investigations looking toward improvement and progress in reformatory techniques. The millenium in prison education and treatment has not yet arrived, but our prisons and reformatories have unquestionably become education-conscious in the last few years. Great masses of information are being gathered by men interested in this social problem. Their scientific basis of research;-- the testing and measuring of cause and effect has not only helped to make the problem of the institution clearer but has also indicated to society the need for economic and social

1. MacCormick, Austin Harbutt, "Prisoners' Progress".  
Journal of Adult Education, V.8, p.254-258, June 1936.



equity in its daily life if it is to get at the roots of delinquency and prevent the less fortunate from treading the path of social decline until they become lost men in some institution and a more serious problem to this same society.





## CHAPTER IV

### Academic and Vocational Rehabilitation

Most reformatories depend essentially on the same devices to bring about reformation. They employ as instruments a system of physical, mental, and moral education. Some institutions emphasize one more than the other but in general the difference is one of methods and quality of personnel. The Massachusetts Reformatory, from the viewpoint of prison administrators, is above the average in both its personnel and methods of application.

The system of treatment found in some institutions tries to compel blind compliance with rules and regulations, keeps the prisoner under constant institutional pressure, and does not train him to assume responsibility for his own acts and behavior. This system tends to destroy individual initiative and will power, and leads to reversion to criminal ways after release. The methods at Concord are designed with intelligent disciplinary control and are aimed to develop individual personality, civic and family responsibility, and ability to use powers of self-guidance and self-discipline.

An understanding of the effectiveness and the limitations of this procedure can best be presented by information on the pre-reformatory commitments of the offender, his intelligence, his reception at the reformatory, and his reaction to the opportunities at his disposal in the field of reformatory



activities during his period of incarceration. The following data taken from the files of the Massachusetts Reformatory shows definitely that the men entering the institution are habitual offenders, and is self-explanatory of the difficult and almost hopeless task of the institution. This table gives the records of one hundred recidivists up to the time of their commitment.

Total number of arrests. . . . .	841
Probations . . . . .	115
Releases (not guilty, filed, etc.) . . .	183
Fined. . . . .	101
Suspended sentences. . . . .	28
Truant schools . . . . .	8
Lyman School for Boys. . . . .	33
Industrial School for Boys . . . . .	43
Houses of Correction . . . . .	62
State Farm . . . . .	5
Other States' Institutions . . . . .	31
Federal Institutions . . . . .	2

In addition to the retarding influence of the habits of the inmates as indicated by the above table, the distribution of intelligence among the reformatory group and its effect upon recidivism, also indicates the cause of failure to reform certain groups among the population. It is noticeable in the following extraction from a much more detailed psychological analysis of the intelligence quotients of inmates that there is a direct relationship between intelligence and recidivism. It indicates need for segregation and more individualism in treatment.

(over)



Intelligence <sup>1</sup> Level	I.Q.	First Commit.	Recidivist	Total	%
Above average	105up	21	4	25	3.4
Average	96-105	44	9	53	7.2
Low average	91-95	56	6	62	8.4
Inferior	81-90	162	39	201	31.5
Borderline defective	71-80	106	100	208	28.3
High moron	61-70	44	33	77	17.3
Low moron	51-60	5	25	30	4.0
Imbecile	36-50	1	1	2	.3

With an understanding of the above research, it can be more readily accepted that the institution is doing well considering the lack of segregation and the pre-determined attitudes of the men. The task of reform is tremendous. No one agency or activity within the institution could hope to accomplish all its objectives. An integration of all possible rehabilitative and corrective agencies into a single policy of institutional education is necessary to redeem, even partially. Working together, their objectives must be to remove illiteracy wherever such a defect is due to deprivation of educational opportunity and not to inherent disability, remove common school deficiencies, provide opportunities for cultural and general education, provide industrial and vocational training, and develop avocations, wholesome recreational and leisure time activities. All these aims are motivating forces in the Reformatory program. Their effectiveness, whether good or bad, can not be simply explained and lightly accepted or discarded.

(over)

1. Annual report of the Commission of Correction, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1936, P. 39.





### Acclimation Procedure

The new inmate is delivered to the care of the Reformatory by a court officer as soon as possible after he has been sentenced for his crime. He is immediately searched by the reception room officials of the prison and taken to a cell for an exchange of clothing. After a thorough physical examination which includes tests for venereal diseases, poor eyesight, and bad teeth, he is returned to his assigned room. Here he is allowed to look over a copy of the Reformatory Manual and learn the rules of discipline, the privileges of the institution and the regulations and procedures of parole. The following extracts indicate the tone of this pamphlet: "The reformatory is run to help boys who are sentenced to it by teaching them self-control, knowledge of a trade and to provide an opportunity for general education. Your conduct should be good. You should be obedient and respectful. You should make as much advancement as you can. You should fit yourself to earn a living by honest effort, and qualify yourself to hold and retain the confidence of those who may employ you after release. It is within your power by your meritorious conduct, diligence in labor, and progress in study to reduce your term of service. You will be paroled when the Board of Parole, in the exercise of their best judgement, believe it wise." While still segregated from the rest of the inmates the new man is visited by the Superintendent and the Deputy. The Superintendent



advises the prisoner about the reformatory and explains the opportunities and possibilities within the reach of the man. He also questions him about his past in an attempt to understand his antisocial conduct. The Deputy then takes the inmate and assigns him to work and recreation according to the new prisoner's main interests. The Chaplain, during the first few days, visits him and explains the use of the library, the religious services provided, and the need for self-help if the prisoner wishes to improve himself.

The prisoners are classified on the basis of marks and conduct grades and the demerit system, as explained in the manual, is the basic influence for the reduction of their period of incarceration. The grade rules are designed to advance those who do well and hasten the day of release by parole. When first entering the institution, he is automatically listed as in the second or intermediate grade. From that grade he goes higher or lower according to his conduct. If his behavior is good and his record of industry satisfactory, he may reach the first grade in four months. Seven hundred and fifty credit marks, earnable at five a day with a one hundred and fifty mark bonus for four perfect consecutive months, are necessary for this promotion. Failure to earn sufficient marks will reduce a second-grade inmate to the third grade. The prisoners change from one grade to another, thereby gaining or losing privileges as they progress through the institution. Ordinarily some sixty-five to seventy per cent of the



population are in the first grade and practically all the remainder in the second grade; only occasionally are there a few inmates in the third grade. The prisoner dislikes to lose his grade rating as it means loss of visiting privileges, letter writing privileges, and usually a change in living-quarter location to a less desirable wing section. Possession of the first grade opens the privileges of the institution to the inmate. He may write letters, have his quota of visitors, attend the various types of entertainment that are brought in from the outside, obtain better cell locations and become one of the members of a so-called Monday Night Club that meets every week and provides itself with its own amateur entertainment. The Deputy Superintendent administers the marking system. Infractions of rules and other offences are reported to him by the instructors and officers and the inmate is brought before him for a review of the case. The inmate is given a chance to defend himself and then is judged on the evidence. The Deputy decides whether to excuse him, place him on probation within the institution or inflict a penalty for the offence. Loss of grade, deduction of marks, deprivation of privileges and solitary confinement in extreme cases are the punishments resorted to. This last is seldom used as it endangers the reformatory efforts by creating an embittered attitude in the mind of the prisoner. In most cases one of two reactions to this grade system is noticeable. Either the inmate becomes "prison wise" and learns the limitations of his





freedom within the institution or he conscientiously tries to maintain a good record for the effect it may have on his parole date. If he is "prison wise" he obeys the essential rules and avoids punishment. He looks for the easy jobs, does anything to maintain his privileges, and usually feels that he is fooling the administration when he obtains the advantages of the first grade with a minimum of effort. Ordinarily the reform procedures make little impression on this type of individual.

### Educational Opportunities

As already stated the assignment to the various educational agencies of the Reformatory is made by the deputy. The evening school is in session four times a week. The regular primary grade system is used for illiterates and for those who lack primary training. There is also a special drawing class and special English, Civil Government and Commercial courses for those of advanced grade. The following tabulation indicates the subjects and groups voluntarily taking the extension courses offered by the State.

English . . . . .	51	men <sup>1</sup>
Arithmetic . . . . .	28	"
Shorthand . . . . .	23	"
Music . . . . .	18	"
Penmanship . . . . .	14	"
Show card writing . . . . .	11	"
Spanish . . . . .	13	"
Harmony . . . . .	6	"
Gas engines . . . . .	8	"
Miscellaneous . . . . .	26	"

(over)

1. Tabulated personally in May 1939.



The primary school work is conducted in a school building within the yard of the prison. Upon admission the inmate is questioned by the Superintendent of Schools and is assigned to two evening classes a week. He is sent anywhere from the illiterate to the special advanced classes according to his ability and past school experiences. Approximately six hundred and fifty inmates out of one thousand in the Reformatory attend the evening school. The instructors in the school are mostly men who have regular positions outside of the institution. The Superintendent is also in charge of the day trade school. Of the instructors at the present time, three are regular high school teachers in surrounding schools, one has a master of arts degree from Boston University, but works for the federal government in his full time position, one is the electrical engineer of the institution, two are instructors in the prison trade school, one a clerk in the institution office, one a local undertaker who specializes in the teaching of illiterates, one a local business man,--a graduate of Boston University, and one the postmaster of Concord, a Holy Cross graduate. Judging from a professional standpoint, the teaching preparation of these men does not qualify them for successful work in this field. Their employment at the Reformatory has been for a considerable length of time, however, and their experience with the men plus their business and trade experiences make them more successful than would otherwise be expected. Most of these men have taught in the Reformatory schools for over



fifteen years and have gained an understanding of the reformatory inmate mind that could never be learned from books. Their practical methods and experiences are a new stimulus to the men who might ordinarily revert to the attitudes that they had developed from their former unsuccessful school experiences.

The size of classes in the evening school hampers individualization of instruction as much as any other one single factor. There are at present forty-two inmates in the special class for illiterates handled by two teachers. There are thirty-five enrolled under one teacher in the drawing class. The majority of the other grades have thirty or more men. Since these are not the ordinary run of pupils, they present vital teaching problems. Individual attention is almost compulsory if satisfactory results are to be obtained. While there is no fixed outline of study in the classes, the men are given spelling, arithmetic, history, geography, and reading textbooks to correspond with the grade of work they are doing. Classes are held for two hours, from six to eight, and the ordinary procedure is to employ the problem and project methods of instruction with some form of supervised study for individual help. While the question of discipline is well taken care of by the means of a bell connected to the Superintendent's office, the problem of getting real work out of the men is one to tax the best efforts of the instructor. The amount of work done is proportional to the interest aroused. Cut and dried textbook study leads to evasion and general restlessness. Topics





of the day always create a lively interest but the problems arising from the textbook routine in the institution school, up until now, is the fault of the writers of the books. Very little consideration has been given to making the textbook a living experience. The inmates are too old to work from a book made for younger children. Especially is this true in reading and spelling. New books and methods should be devised so that this material can be presented from an adult point of view. There is much to be done in this field for overage and retarded pupils both in reformatory and regular public schools.

The hours spent in school are so few that diversified work is the rule. So many inmates enter and leave the school room during the year at the beginning or expiration of their prison sentences that work would have to be continually reviewed if it wasn't for the short unit method of procedure adopted by the instructors. Each piece of work has to be an entirety in itself. There is justification for this, however, in that the prisoners do not need a regular public grade school education. They do not need all that the public school teaches and they do need much that it does not teach. Since it is impossible to teach what the public school does with continuous instruction, the best that can be hoped for is some instruction in fundamentals plus general knowledge that may enable the inmate to improve himself when he leaves the institution. Even the curriculum of fundamentals must be handled with as many short cuts as possible. Most of the work accomplished must be done in a



limited time so that emphasis should be placed only on drills in spelling, reading, elementary arithmetic and other processes that must be retained to make the new education valuable for outside use. In English and Mathematics at the Reformatory, the instructors attempt to teach the prisoners to read well enough to understand newspapers, health information, job instructions and to perform the arithmetic processes involved in the payments of taxes. Fractions and decimals are the limits attempted in arithmetic as they seem to be at the height of comprehension in the average inmate mind. In the teaching of history and geography the material used and the objectives aimed at are picked for their value in social readjustment. A general understanding of economic geography and the need for cooperation among men and nations are taught with the idea of creating community interest and responsibility. The degree of difficulty of the work is determined by the grade assignment of the individual. All prisoners are not limited by these fundamental studies. Those who are capable are given the opportunity to assimilate as much as they can. The State extension courses, the drawing class, and the commercial class are primarily for those who are interested in advanced work above the offering of the regular classroom programs.

### Vocational Opportunities

In the vocational assignments made by the Deputy, we have one of the most responsible duties of his office. He is charged



with placing the men in trades which may be the means of rehabilitating them economically and socially when they return to society. This is one place in the program of the Reformatory where each man must be treated as an individual. If he is to profit by his trade school training, he must be a willing partner in the choice of his trade work. At the present time in the Reformatory, those placed and engaged in learning trades are as listed below:

Manual training. . . . .	50 <sup>1.</sup>
Tin work . . . . .	8
Tailoring. . . . .	35
Shoe shop. . . . .	13
Spinning . . . . .	80
Furniture. . . . .	162
Weaving. . . . .	120
Painting . . . . .	12
Laundering . . . . .	16
Printing . . . . .	15
Electricity. . . . .	25
Gardeners. . . . .	150
Miscellaneous. . . . .	300

In addition to these opportunities, there are many more in the maintenance organization of the institution.

#### Trade School

The manual training and trade school organization of the Reformatory is in charge of the Superintendent of schools with a corps of practically trained instructors and guards. The Superintendent is a Wentworth graduate and has a master's degree from Harvard University. He was formerly employed as

1. Tabulated personally in May 1939.





head of the evening schools at Wentworth Institute and has been associated with Reformatory work for about fifteen years. His training and experience makes him one of the outstanding men in this kind of work. His department is divided according to the trades taught. Most of his instructors have at one time or another been engaged in the trade they teach or have learned the trade while working in the institution. Their ability in their particular trades is unquestioned as they have been, in most cases, long employed at the Reformatory.

Youths under twenty-one committed to the institution are automatically assigned to the trade school. After being questioned by the Deputy as to their desires and interests, they are placed in one of the following trade classes: welding, automobile, printing, masonry, plumbing, tin-smithing, pattern making, or manual training. In the woodworking shop of the trade school, about fifty boys are employed under the guidance of a shop instructor. About five hours a day are spent at this work by the boys. While the equipment in the shop is modern, there is really not enough of it to take care of the needs of so many students. I have visited this group unexpectedly many times and have always been impressed with the keen interest they take in their work. The procedure is to make blue prints of the projects which they are to work on under the direction of the instructor. After the acceptance of the plans, wood and other materials are furnished and they begin to construct according to their drawings. The beginners start with simple



projects and before long have mastered the rudiments and are working on something more complex. In addition to the project work, which is mostly toys, much repairing of institution and personnel furniture is carried on. This repair work serves the purpose of practical application of their training to a great extent. Advanced courses in trade school work through correspondence courses are accessible to those who desire them.

In the tin-shop there are thirteen full-time workers at the trade. These young tin-smiths learn how to handle the tools of the trade and work with tin and zinc in constructing their projects. They plan and make many toys and articles such as whistles, bird-houses, airplanes, and animals. Most of their work is bought by the guards and instructors for their homes and their children. The metals used mostly are discarded cans and pails from the institution kitchen. While figures are not available, tinsmithing is still an active trade and it is very possible that these men could, with a little outside help, find jobs as apprentices and become self-supporting and dependable.

In the plumbing school at the present time, only about six boys are attempting to learn the trade. They are under the tutelage of a master plumber who teaches them to work with lead and pipes in preparation for apprenticeship on the outside. Some of the work of this plumbing group is displayed at present in the guard room at the front office of the institution. This exhibition is certainly a credit to the



instructor in charge. For practical experience in working at this trade all institutional plumbing, and there is plenty of it in a place this size, is taken care of by the plumbing school. No better practical experience could be had than this as they can be supervised by the instructor while on an actual job.

The trade school paint shop at present has twelve men learning how to mix and apply paint. Their instructor teaches them the use and care of brushes and the proper methods of applying all kinds of paints. They make extensive use of spray-guns and some of their work, as I have seen it, compares favorably with regular expert painter's work. Their practical experience comes in the never ending job of repainting the buildings of the institution. In addition to this they spend much time finishing the objects made by the woodworking group.

Undoubtedly the most completely equipped school of the trade group is the automobile shop. Under the guidance of an instructor well versed in garage mechanics, about fifteen boys spend their days working on automobiles and motors. They learn to do about everything that a garageman is called upon to do. The apprenticeship method seems to be the method of instruction. The longer they are in the auto shop, the more comprehensive is the work assigned to them. Theories are not taught but a trade is. Starting with greasing and oiling of cars, the boys progress to valve grinding and overhauling. Dropping in for a visit one day I saw them with a five ton State truck literally





spread out on the floor, piece by piece. In a week's time they had reassembled the truck, replaced old parts, ground the valves, and painted it all over so that it looked and ran like a new truck. Most of their experience comes from the repairing of state motor equipment and from the work that they do on the cars of the instructors and guards of the institution. The attitude of the automobile workers stands out because of the evident desire on their part to learn. The school itself is well-equipped. It has a pressure auto lift, a fine metal lathe, an automatic valve grinder, and many other tools necessary in the modern garage. If the inmates spend sufficient time in this department, and they have the desire to continue the trade, there is little question of doubt that most of them could find places as garage helpers and mechanics in the expanding market for such labor.

Another department of the trade school that is worthy of mention for the opportunity that it offers is the print shop. About twenty-five boys are employed here. The equipment consists of one large cylinder press and two small ones. Eight of the inmates are learning to be compositors and proof readers while the remainder work on card and job printing. The print shop does the entire job of putting out the institution monthly, "Our Paper". This paper in itself is evidence of the success of the print shop. I have seen many of its issues and they run uniformly good as far as printing is concerned. The literary work within the paper is also worthy of comment. The



men engaged in the writing of this do a fine job with their prison news, outside stories, and cover design work. The operators of the small cylinder presses are kept busy on jobs for the institution. All of the forms and blanks for the office are made here. The requisition pads and time sheets are also printed by the inmates and are used in all departments of the institution. Given sufficient time at this work I am sure that the men trained here would be capable at the same work outside if jobs were available.

#### Semi-maintenance Opportunities

The needs of the institution require the manufacture of many yards of cloth. Inmates who have expressed no desire for a particular trade are employed in the textile mills at various jobs producing this material. The plant for this work is quite large and employs approximately two hundred of the inmates. All processes from carding and sorting to weaving and finishing are carried on. Blankets, suitings, and even cloth for shirts and sheets are made. In the process of manufacture, about one hundred prisoners are employed in the weaving room, seventy in the spinning room and the remainder in the incidental jobs about the mill. The materials made here supply all state institutions through a system of transfer that the State uses. Not all of the men learn to be spinners or weavers but those that do should find that their experiences will be helpful later on. The remainder of the mill workers



learn how to dress cloth, fix looms and develop an understanding of cloth manufacture that will always be an asset.

The tailor shop of the institution keeps about thirty-five boys busy making shirts, pants, and coats for the inmates out of the cloth sent over from the mill. There isn't much to brag about in the style of the clothes made, but at least they learn to sew while in the prison. They do considerable repair work and pressing, and probably could learn enough about tailoring here to make a start in this work outside. The outlook for them, however, is not too bright, as the rough work they do doesn't indicate that they have developed much of a technique. Similarly there are thirteen boys employed in the shoe shop. They cut the leather and sew up all the shoes and slippers worn in the institution. This work is rough, and I dare say that when it came to using modern shoe machinery and working on fine leathers, none of the boys would be considered qualified without considerable additional experience. They do get a fundamental knowledge in both of these shops, however, and perhaps it will be an incentive to learn more when they get out.

The laundry group of sixteen boys carries on the work of a large laundry by taking care of the washing of the entire institution. The inmates do a very fine job in this department. They are taught how to run washers and extractors and even learn to repair the machines when they break down. There isn't any shirking in this work as the laundry must be able to





service the institution at all times. The boys must learn their jobs and do an acceptable piece of work, as the evidence of inferior work would be noticeable to everyone on the backs of the inmates.

One of the most interesting groups working in the Reformatory is in the furniture department. There are about one hundred and sixty men here. Most of them are the State Prison transfers and really are not the type for reform measures. Also among them are the recidivists of the Reformatory. Their ages range from twenty-five to forty-two and their sentences are in most cases longer than the average inmate. This department is set up purely for maintenance, but by the very nature of it, the men can't help but learn a trade. They make chairs, desks, tables, woodworking benches, and many other pieces of furniture. They supply all state institutions with their products. The articles turned out compare very favorably with those of outside furniture shops. The men who do the sand-stroking, gluing, and finishing here, certainly are capable of doing the same work outside if they want to settle down. Unfortunately more reform than just teaching a trade is needed among this group.

#### Maintenance

Of the remaining boys in the Reformatory about three hundred of them are engaged in purely maintenance work. Some of them are new boys who haven't chosen a trade yet or old-



timers who are about to be paroled. Others are mentally inferior and incapable of any complex operation and still other boys are capable but prefer to do this type of work. These maintenance details can also learn a trade if they are properly guided and taught as apprentices in their respective jobs. Instruction in connection with the maintenance jobs should be given. Courses of a preparatory nature should be available for those who wish to prepare for entrance into specific occupations represented among the details, and trade extension courses introduced for those who have experience already in the trades represented in the maintenance field. Both types of courses could be given part time and the maintenance work could be utilized to provide the necessary practice.

The kitchen help and waiters are two groups that could readily profit by additional information on their particular jobs. The kitchen group prepare meals for all inmates and take care of the work in the kitchen. They have little to do with the choices on the menu but they perform important duties in seeing that the food is properly cooked and the kitchen thoroughly cleaned. As for the waiters, they are the bus boys of the dining room. They bring in the food, and clear away and clean the tables after the meal is over. With a little more experience and knowledge in the requirements of their jobs on the outside, they could probably earn a living in this manner.

The yard men and gardeners of the crew have the



responsibility of keeping the yards clean and the grass trimmed. The yard men shovel coal, repair fences and move objects here and there about the yard as directed. The gardeners cut the many lawns about the institution, raise and plant nursery stock, and in general try to make the institution a place of beauty. The evidence of their work is in the floral displays that are so symmetrically planted in front of the Reformatory buildings. Without question, their success here could be transplanted with them outside if they were content to remain in the same occupation.

The heating plant operators and the electrical helpers are both on their way to good jobs if they could be encouraged by courses in this work to continue to master the trade. The heating plant operators stoke the furnaces that supply the heat from a central unit to the whole institution. They learn how to handle and repair boilers and certainly with additional theoretical study they could have sufficient information and proficiency to obtain an engineer's license. The electrical crew have charge of the lighting system of the entire prison. They do considerable wiring and repairing and only recently<sup>1</sup>. completed the wiring of all cells for the installation of radio equipment. Their work at present is not of a complex nature but the experience they are gaining will enable them to become electricians' helpers and apprentices when they return to society.

The hardest job performed by any maintenance detail is

1. June 10, 1939.





that done by the farmers. Most of the boys who are within a few months parole are put on this work to harden them and key them up for longer hours of work when they leave. They are awakened very early in the morning and are taken out of their dormitory to work in the barns and fields of the institution. Their living quarters are separate from the main part of the Reformatory and they really live in practical freedom of the walls and surveillance of the guards. They very seldom try to escape when they only have a few months to go, as they know the penalty for doing this is five additional years in the institution when they are apprehended again. Their work consists of taking care of the institution live stock and supplying all the vegetables needed for the table. They raise acres of corn, potatoes, beets, tomatoes, cabbage, beans, and many other wholesome varieties of vegetables. They produce enough to supply the institution all through the year. During the harvesting season, they put up hundreds of giant size cans of their products for the winter months. Even though the work is educational in the sense of agricultural knowledge, I am afraid that very few of the boys would ever plan to continue it after they were released. Most of them are from cities of the State and have little real interest in agricultural pursuits. To them it is only a means to an end, and the end comes when they are free once more to go to their old haunts and join the "gang" in flirting with trouble again.

In this chapter I have attempted to show the value of the



various academic and vocational agencies at the Reformatory. I have pointed out their possibilities in the rehabilitation of the inmates. Studies already made point to an alarming total of recidivists in spite of these opportunities. Evidently there is more to this problem than arbitrarily supplying the inmate with a trade.



## CHAPTER V

## Other Educational Agencies

Any scheme for promoting reformation must include play as well as work, relaxation as well as exertion, and humor as well as serious thought. A recreation program that is wisely planned and well administered has proven a valuable aid in prison efficiency. Its contributions are the better health, better training, and improved discipline of those who have had the opportunity which such a program affords. Recreation promotes health of body and of mind. Perversions which thrive in the midst of physical laziness vanish in the face of vigorous activity. The recreational interests form a vital part of the training program, and send a person forth to normal life with broadened interests and with resources for the leisure hours. Very often the first offender finds himself involved in some sort of wrongdoing because of a misuse of his leisure, and recidivism is most often due to the same cause. The well-rounded recreation program provides a large group of interests, not merely physical, but social, self-expressive, artistic, and educational--recognizing the value of any interest which may become a part of a broad program for character training. The average inmate of a prison is not in the habit of playing the game of life on the level,--he is apt to be a quitter and yellow when things don't go the way he would like them. He may, especially if he is young, learn



through recreation those lessons of self-discipline and self-control which probably could not be taught to him by abstract teaching while he is in the institution.

### Physical Education

The routine physical examination given to a prisoner on entrance to the Massachusetts Reformatory is the first opportunity for health education. According to the findings of Dr. Glueck, about fourteen per cent are in good physical condition, seventy-nine per cent fair, and seven per cent poor<sup>1</sup>. Those who are in immediate need are taken care of in the institution hospital by the Reformatory doctor. The remainder are assigned to health programs that have the aim of building the inmate to maximum physical efficiency. During the first month that the new arrival is in the prison, he drills for an hour a day to get the routine of military training, correct posture defects, and develop the necessary alertness for more vigorous activity. Throughout the remainder of his term, he gets drill twice a week except in the winter months when it is held indoors and reduced to once a week.

Aside from drill, the inmate is allowed a recreation period every afternoon of the week for about one hour. He is allowed to walk around the small yard and to take part in the various inmate games that are being played. For equipment, the institution furnishes baseball paraphernalia, swings and trapezes, weights, horseshoes, and many other playground

1. Glueck, Sheldon and Eleanor, "500 Criminal Careers." Alfred A. Knopf, 1930.





necessities. The boys are organized into baseball leagues similar to the big leagues on the outside and take a very active interest in playing the game. Tag football also has its enthusiasts. Basketball is played by the inmate prison league both out of doors and in the gymnasium. Competitive sport, for its moral value, is adequately provided by inviting teams from surrounding towns to visit the institution for basketball and baseball games. The enthusiasm and need for fair play in these games cannot help but have a deterrent influence on the regular standards of the inmates. The events looked forward to the most by the boys are the competitive track meets held on holiday mornings. At this time the boys compete with each other for money prizes furnished by the Superintendent. From my observation, the spirit to win and win fairly is uppermost in the minds of the inmates when taking part in these institution athletic affairs. I believe the program is sound and beneficial and a credit to the physical director who has the responsibility for its organization.

#### Religious Services

A well equipped chapel is the center of the religious life of the Reformatory. It has a seating capacity of one thousand and with its pipe organ and general atmosphere, lends itself to religious services to a degree not usually found in prisons. One of the many duties of the chaplain is to question all inmates about their religious beliefs upon entrance to the



institution. They are allowed to attend services every Sunday and upon any religious holidays that may be a part of their particular faith. The staff of the Reformatory consists of a full-time Protestant chaplain, and a part-time Catholic and Jewish chaplain. The institution rules make allowances for the Passover and other special days of the Jewish faith and also for visits of the Catholic Priest for special services connected with his church. Regular attendance at these church services is a good influence on the boys and certainly helps to keep them from despairing entirely of ever straightening out their lives.

#### Library Facilities

Libraries are not working miracles in the reformation of men inclined to follow a life of crime and are not making educated individuals out of underprivileged men overnight, but they are, without question, helping to solve the problem of idleness, and are affording wholesome recreation on a much larger scale than was formerly available. The opportunity of self-sustained reading and study will furnish inmates with valuable training in those habits of independent study and thought that are needed in every day life. Good reading habits acquired in prison are likely to continue after an inmate leaves prison and returns home. The greatest curse of prison life is the degrading effect of idleness. The library plays its part in making the prison a place of hope rather than



despair. Inmates who are committed to our institutions represent all kinds of people that can be found among human beings of the outside world. The versatility of the library bookshelves is bound to be a common fountain of satisfying experiences for the great majority.

At Concord, the chaplain, assisted by six inmates, has charge of the institution library. There are six to seven thousand volumes on the shelves. The subject matter caters to the minds of the average reformatory youth. Most of the books are obtained by regular state appropriation loans from the state library or gifts from town and city libraries throughout the state. All of the books are read carefully by the chaplain or instructors of the institution before they are put into circulation. Each boy is allowed two books a week and chooses these from book lists that are posted in the shops where he works. There are no reading rooms in the library but books are delivered by the chaplain's helpers,--each of the six boys being assigned to deliver and collect the books from specified tiers in the wings. The loss of grade because of rule infractions is the only reason for denying the library privilege to the inmates. Since books are natural and available companions of leisure, the prisoners jealously protect the privilege of obtaining their quota and so self-educate themselves in discipline as well as occupying their leisure time profitably.

(over)





## Entertainment

When the inmate of the Reformatory reaches the first grade in the discipline scale after about four months, his privilege is to attend the performances which are given every Sunday and holiday in the Chapel. Through the benefactions of the motion picture distributors some of the latest films are shown at this time. The projection machine used is quite modern and the main feature plus a number of short subjects make up a program comparable to any outside theatre. Needless to say they all enjoy this kind of entertainment. Since the pictures are chosen with consideration of the audience involved, most of the shows have a good moral theme.

On the Sundays that pictures are not available, the group is entertained by the institution band or by one from the outside. Sometimes, this is varied by bringing in outside lecturers and entertainers. The value of this regular period of entertainment is basically one of replacing old leisure time bad habits with new beneficial ones.

## Radio

The newest educational and recreational experiment at the Reformatory is the radio. A few weeks ago, installations were completed for the reception of broadcasts in the individual cells. Each room has a set of ear phones and a connection plug. The programs are carefully chosen by the Deputy and a



list of stations to be turned to at specific times are sent into the guard room where a master radio set connected to all the rooms is controlled by the officer in charge. The choice of program has been very liberal and at the present time, the boys are over-anxious to return to their cells for broadcasts of news, dramas, and baseball games. Since the radio is turned on from three o'clock in the afternoon to ten at night, silence in the cell blocks is especially noted during these hours. At present, the hours and programs are being experimented with, and it is too early to attempt a real evaluation of this new instrument. From an educational standpoint, the possibilities are unlimited.

#### Monday Night Club

One of the most interesting activities and perhaps one of the most beneficial is the Monday Night Club. It is composed of a selected group of about three hundred inmates out of the first grade with the best conduct records. Its programs are supervised, controlled, and censored by the Assistant Deputy. The club meets once a week and entertains itself with its own talent. It produces plays, has oratorical contests, orchestral concerts and even puts on amateur nights. From questions I have asked from active participants in this group, I believe they look forward to its meetings and feel especially proud to be a member and contribute to its activities. Some of the boys are quite talented and enjoy the effort of attempting to



please what they consider a critical audience. While the organization was formed purely as a recreational project and a special privilege right for good conduct, its educational moral value is tremendous. It lends itself readily to the creation of an appreciation of good entertainment and gives scope for self-expression in acceptable fields of leisure time activities. The reaction of inmates who have been successful in pleasing the Club audience speaks well for its inspiring effects. Recognition of worth is paramount in the desires of these frustrated youths. Once they feel that they have succeeded, they start planning for further conquests of the applause of this audience. This certainly is a pursuit worth encouraging. If they begin to look for praise for honest effort here, perhaps they will be dissatisfied with any other kind later.

### Music

Opportunities to hear or produce really good music are very rare in most reformatories. The introduction of the radio at Concord makes the hearing of good music possible. As for the producing of good music, the Reformatory has a band and an orchestra. Under the direction of a music teacher who visits the institution every two or three days, these two organizations practice. There are approximately fifty men in the band and about one fourth of them are separated from it to make up the orchestra. They have a special building in the yard as a practicing center and occupy it every morning tuning



up and rehearsing their marches and popular music. Their instruments are furnished by the State and any boy who wishes may practice and learn to play if he is at all capable.

The regular duties of the band are to play the marches when the boys are at drill or filing into chapel, and to give concerts from the guard room to all the wings on special occasions. The orchestra also gives concerts in the guard room and sometimes entertains at the grade meetings. To be charitable to both these organizations, I must say that, even though they are not expert musicians, they produce passable music, have a lot of innocent fun, and try hard to master their instruments. While music is certainly of great value in the institution, the benefits derived by those taking part at the Reformatory is more recreational than cultural at the present time.

### Our Paper

"Our Paper", as it is named, is published every week by the inmates of the Reformatory. It is usually about twelve pages long and is the size of the average periodical. The Chaplain of the institution is in charge of the contents of the publication and the instructor of the printing shop has the responsibility for its printing. Every boy in the institution is furnished with a copy. Most of the information, stories, and jokes contained in it, are chosen by the boys from other books and papers and are used under the censorship of the





Chaplain. Some of the material is original. Occasionally the inmate contributors try a hand at editorial writing or news reporting of information within the Reformatory. Usually the sporting events inside and outside of the institution are included. The baseball league news, the count of the prison, and the parole board visits are read with interest by the boys. The regular back page columns of "Sense and Nonsense", "Odd Items", and "Here and There" also seems to find institutional favor.

Those who have a part in setting up and printing this paper obtain considerable vocational experience. Besides improving their English and spelling by writing for the paper, they learn to set type, run printing presses, and proof read material. These are all basically valuable for any future work that they may attempt in the printing field.

Throughout this chapter, I have pointed out the opportunities available to the boys in the institution and the various means that the officials use to interest the inmates in vocations and avocations. A great many of the boys grasp the chance to take part in these activities and yet, there are many who treat them as a joke and refuse to take part or do anything except put in the time which they feel that the State has demanded of them. Those who do take an interest, find that this time passes more quickly and pleasantly by being active in these pursuits. In addition, they really improve themselves in their chosen occupation and lose considerable of the anti-



social attitude that they brought with them. This attitude, born of inferiority brought on by being unable to do anything well, is definitely affected once they have decided to win approbation by a mastery of some skill within the institution. By accomplishing this, these Reformatory agencies have proved their worth.



## CHAPTER VI

## Progress in Reformation

Individual analysis and guidance are even more necessary in the reformatory than in the prison because the young prisoner is more likely to have high ideas about his occupational future. He has a false confidence that he can succeed in trades which only a few can follow successfully. He has not yet learned how seriously the lack of academic and vocational education will handicap him in life. Proper guidance in the fundamental studies are necessary if he is to realize at all any of the frustrated plans that he has built in his imagination. While the possibilities of our reformatories in accomplishing this objective are well illustrated in the excellent progress that is being made in some of these institutions, the poor organizations of others indicate the need for more progressive reform within the administration set-up itself.

Taking it as a whole, the educational program of the Pennsylvania Industrial Reformatory at Huntingdon is probably the best in the country. The academic and vocational work are correlated to an unusual degree. The teachers in charge of the academic work are trained men and are continuing their training under the auspices of the Pennsylvania State College. The program of vocational education appears to be more successful than that of any other penal institution. There are both trade





schools and productive industries, and actual use is made of the work of the institution for vocational training. Over thirty occupations are taught by thirty-two qualified instructors in well-equipped schools and shops. There is a genuine attempt to give vocational guidance: prisoners are not assigned until they have been thoroughly analyzed at a staff meeting, and have been taken on a preliminary tour of the shops and trade schools in order that their interests and preferences may be taken into account in determining assignments. The vocational instructors take courses in teacher-training under the direction of the School of Industrial Education at Pennsylvania State College for increased understanding of their work and improvement in their techniques. Modern reformatory methods are noticeable throughout the institution and speaks well for the scientific approach of Pennsylvania prison officials to the problem.

In New Jersey, the State Reformatory at Annandale is worthy of comment. It was originally started as a unit of the reformatory at Rahway, but it was made a separate unit in 1929. It is unwallled and has cottages with individual rooms for the boys. It houses about four hundred and fifty inmates and in almost every way it represents a marked departure from the old concepts of prison policy and administration. Inmates participate actively in the planning and carrying out of the recreational and entertainment program of the institution. This is accomplished through house committees who work with the



director of athletics and recreation. It is the policy of the institution to keep each hour of the inmate's time occupied. Clubs of all sorts are organized for this purpose. They are operated with an ultimate aim toward proper rehabilitation. The boys belonging to them are permitted to work on their own initiative with the approval of the instructor and at the same time are taught as to the correct procedures to be followed in their particular activities. This institution at Annandale is to be commended for the program of club activities which have been developed, and the extent to which the inmates participate in actively planning and carrying out the recreation and entertainment programs. The system of having cottage committees work with the director of athletics and recreation creates a splendid opportunity in training the boys in community responsibilities. Anti-social attitudes are weakened considerably by this treatment.

With the exception of the Federal Industrial Reformatory for men at Chillicothe, Ohio, most of our central and western state reformatories are in a deplorable condition of backwardness. Concentration on industrial specialization for work programs in these institutions usually are carried on at the expense of good reformation results. The pants factory at the Nebraska Reformatory and the garment factory in the Iowa Reformatory at Anamosa are representative of the type of work that interests the officials in these states. These industries have very little training value for prisoners and if anything



have a deadening effect on the minds of the men. The stone shops in the Minnesota Reformatory at St. Cloud are also misplacing energy that could be turned to more valuable pursuits. In Indiana, the Reformatory suffers from emphasis on routine, and the program is handicapped by overcrowding and mass treatment of individuals when just the opposite is needed.

In practically all the western reformatories, agriculture and allied activities have been extensively developed. The prisoners who are assigned to this work receive considerable experience but there is rarely any attempt at organized instruction in these departments and so, most of the work becomes routine and distasteful.

The Chillicothe Reformatory of the Federal system bids fair to be one of the leaders in scientific treatment of the educational problems of prisoners. Here each new boy is given an achievement test and a thorough mental examination by a qualified psychologist. The results of these reveal the inmate's educational possibilities. If it is found that he possesses the interests, aptitudes, and abilities to profit from a trade training course in the institution, he is recommended for such training. An introduction of this sort to the reformatory gives the prisoner a different idea of the purpose of the place. He is more apt to consider it a school than a prison. The educational program in this institution is considered in the light of the functional needs and interests of the men to be served. When a need becomes apparent, a curriculum is developed





which is believed suitable for the training for it. When the Science Training Project<sup>1</sup> was started here, it found its reason for existence in the fact that the lack of knowledge of everyday common phenomena in terms of even simple scientific understanding, was a pronounced characteristic of most of the boys who entered the institution. It was felt that information in this field would benefit them as it would teach them of the dangers, advantages, contributions and uses that scientific facts might have for them in their daily lives. Based on the needs of the boys, this idea of curriculum development is a progressive innovation of merit. Many curricula are being developed at the present time and new interest in education is being created here because of the appeal that these new courses have. In particular, the course in Related Trades Information is well attended. This course, as set up, embraces units of information such as trades mathematics, drafting, blueprint reading, elementary science, business methods, and social relations. Visual aid materials such as charts and films are used and the interest and values of the course are measured by its success in getting positive reactions from the inmates who are reawakened in their desire to investigate further into these fields. The success of this institution in bringing these needs to light by individual treatment, proves the value of organizing to meet the interests and abilities of those incarcerated.

In comparing the success or failure of reformatory institutions throughout the country, the one set up as the

1. "Federal Offenders," U. S. Dept. of Justice, Bureau of Prisons, 1935-36.





State Prison Colony, at Norfolk, Massachusetts, should be considered for its contributions to penology. Here we have an organization based on the idea that community life within the institution is a necessary practice if the inmates are to be broken of anti-social habits. Even though the physical plant is surrounded by a high wall to prevent escape, the men within are treated as equals by the officers and instructors in charge. They live in dormitories, help to run the institution and in general, are given responsibilities that are commensurate with their needs. The administrative organization and living conditions of the Colony are made to approximate as nearly as possible the atmosphere and spirit of a normal community. Major emphasis is placed upon constructive agencies calculated to promote in the individual normal attitudes and reactions toward social opportunities. Treatment of the individual is based primarily on the case study that has been made of his life. He is in charge of house officers who live in the dormitories with him and who guide and advise him on his social and economic problems. Every effort is made to keep the institution attitude between house officers and inmates one of confidence and trust. They are encouraged to confer with each other so that the house officer may act as a friend and counselor. Each inmate is assigned an individual program of work suited to his personality and social needs at Norfolk with the hope that he may gain confidence in himself and find satisfaction in honest achievement.



This institution is still too new to determine its success or failure. Its twelve years of existence have seen both praise and criticism. Some believe that it pampers the individual too much while others claim that by picking the best men only for treatment, the results are entirely misleading. At present, under the supervision of the State Department of Correction, only the men who seem to have a chance of being reformed are sent here. This may be all right from the standpoint of the men who are transferred, but up until recently it was objected to by the administrators of the other State institutions as it made it appear that their institutions were unsuccessful in comparison. Until the time when statistics may prove the worth of Norfolk, it must be accepted at least as a progressive attempt to save some of the youths who have been offenders toward society. The ideas of community cooperation, individual counseling and guidance are worthy procedures for any correctional program.

In comparison to these institutions, the Massachusetts Reformatory has many of their good features and some of their poor ones. The type of individual sent to Concord limits the reformatory procedures right from the start. The organization set up to handle the boys, however, is as good as any that I have mentioned, and there are as many trade opportunities and instructors as Chillicothe, and more recreational opportunity than most of the others. The club program at Annadale is more extensive but the age level there is lower



and so the group is more conducive to suggestions for self-activity. Given a picked group of men of similar status, with the present administration and organization at Concord, there is little doubt that results in respect to rehabilitation would measure up successfully with those of any other reformatory in the country. When it becomes necessary to treat all types of men, with all kinds of records, in one institution, then it is essential to have specialists qualified to measure and segregate within the institution, to protect one group from another, and enable the best treatments to be given to the proper groups. If all groups are allowed to mix within the institution, much of the good work is destroyed. If the Massachusetts Reformatory is to be judged justly, the above factors must be taken into consideration. If we continually demand better results, we must be ready to pay for more individualization, more specialized institutions, and more scientifically educated and higher salaried penal administrators and staffs.





## CHAPTER VII

## Conclusion

In this study of the Massachusetts Reformatory, there have been certain facts and conditions which have stood out as influential in determining the successes and failures of the institution. My introductory analysis showed that the need for the physical plant at Concord was unquestioned. We must have some place to handle offenders;--they are many and our prisons are few in number. While this institution has been maintained for the purpose of reforming its inmates, the type being sent there;--the State Prison transfers and the recidivists, make the results of the educational program seem fruitless. I have shown that the attitude of the new inmates is influenced very much by the "old-timers" and consequently develops a spirit of prisoner solidarity and lack of cooperation with the reformatory agencies. In my survey of the educational program, I pointed out that expansion and reorganization of the supervision, courses and textbooks would certainly improve the results obtained at the present time. Attention was called to the fact that these improvements could be undertaken by the staff on hand if the necessary cost could be added to the Reformatory budget. Society itself can be held responsible for the failures of a program that is understaffed and under financed.

In order to rectify the faults of the present system in



this State, and in other states of the union, many experiments and researches are being conducted. I called attention to the findings of the Gluecks in Massachusetts, and the experiment being tried at Elmira in New York. These should indicate the need for scientific treatment of inmates if we ever hope to obtain the results that we must have for the protection of society. Finally, I included a detailed analysis of the present techniques at the Reformatory and showed what the various agencies there were accomplishing and what they might do with a better selected group of prisoners. In a comparison of the reformatory efforts here with those of similar institutions, it was shown that scientific programs with highly skilled men produced the best results;--that places like Chillicothe, in Ohio, and Norfolk in Massachusetts, were bound to be more successful than the Reformatory in rehabilitation of their boys, because of the segregation methods and classification procedures used. In the general survey of non-specializing state reformatories, the Massachusetts Reformatory, as was pointed out, can be considered one of the leaders in this field. Its plant is larger and pleasant;--its educational opportunities are varied and worth while, and its personnel, while limited in training, is always willing to help and advise the inmates when it is within its power.

#### Recommendations

If the Massachusetts Reformatory, is to accomplish its



purpose, there are certain definite changes and improvements that must be made. Efforts to get men to reform need the hearty cooperation of inmates, officials, and all the social forces that exist within the State. Nobody can save a fellow man who does not wish to be saved. Throwing out a life line accomplishes nothing for those who will not grasp it and make strenuous efforts to save themselves. A hostile public, by its attitude toward the movement and its actions regarding it, can neutralize all efforts to promote reformation.

When society recognizes that it is profitable to spend large sums for reformation, it will reap the benefits that an adequate system gives to the public. At the present time, the overcrowded and undermanned institutions that we have, limits the specialized treatment that scientists know is necessary for real success. There should be a definite limit of the number committed to any one reformatory. Five hundred in an institution is sufficient. More than this makes the individual guidance difficult and the institutional procedures too impersonal. If the Concord plant is to be used as a reformatory, it should contain only those boys who are first offenders or at most, only those who have very little criminal experience. State Prison men and habitual criminals should not be kept in contact with them. Many believe that if any segregation program is put into effect, the Norfolk Prison Colony should have the boys most susceptible to reform. I agree that Norfolk is ideally suited for work of this kind, but feel that a second



institution of this category is needed because of the large number of boys in this group. Concord could carry on the same type of work that is being done at Norfolk. Once it has been established that the purpose of the Massachusetts Reformatory is as its name suggests, then confusion as to its methods can be straightened out. It could concentrate its educational agencies on the preparation of its pupils for life after their release, and coordinate the academic education program with the vocational and industrial organization without the necessity of considering it as punishment for some and education for others. If reform is the prime object of the program then the institution can plan to keep the inmates continuously active to prevent deterioration of mental alertness which is an almost inevitable by-product of idle confinement. It can attempt to break up the undesirable habits and attitudes that have been a part of the boys when they entered, and can substitute, by deliberate effort, new habits, interests, and abilities. If the prison can provide new stimuli, it will call forth new reactions and ultimately produce a new person with a new character. The boy will act differently and so will become different. The process of unlearning criminal behavior need not be any more difficult than learning to become one.

A personal study of each individual prisoner is of first importance in a progressive reformatory system, and this study should be made immediately after a prisoner is committed so





that no time is wasted in beginning the work of re-educating and rehabilitating. Immediately upon conviction, each prisoner should be sent to a receiving prison for a period of study through which will be determined the unit of the prison system for which he is best adapted and the treatment and training he should receive. He should be subjected to a physical and mental examination by a physician, a psychologist and a psychiatrist and this report, plus the investigation report of social workers into his past life, should be analyzed by a classification commission and his disposition taken care of in the light of the facts revealed. Through this method, the Reformatory will receive only those who are fit to live and learn together.

Once the boys are in the Reformatory, a progressive educational program, including general academic training, vocational guidance and vocational and social experience can be administered. If the majority of the inmates are to be returned to society better equipped for social and economic citizenship than they were at the time of commitment, they must be trained for occupational competency and be given sufficient educational training to become intelligent members of that society. In the elementary grades they should be subjected to a program adapted to adult needs. This program should not be organized as a standardized grade-school program as it is now in the evening school, but should be reorganized in curriculum by experts to fit the needs of the inmates. It



should include special training in civics and citizenship, and, whenever possible, should be correlated with the occupational interests of the inmates. Training in elementary subjects should become a part of the vocational program planned for the individual. Training in English is desirable for those learning the printing trades, arithmetic for those learning the machinist or carpentry trades, and other elementary subjects for those in other occupations. Special attention should be given to the foreign-born inmates who have but little understanding of American citizenship, and who are further handicapped by their inability to read English and speak and understand it well. Careful and painstaking training in the privileges and responsibilities of American citizenship should be an essential part of their education.

In the advanced courses, the inmate should be better informed about the possible extension courses available. Every effort should be made by the teaching personnel to advise and help the boys to find the work and education they desire.

With sufficient funds, further improvement could be attained at Concord by purchasing more modern textbooks, teaching more trade-relation subjects, and improving the teaching personnel by paying higher salaries and requiring specialists in the various fields. Each teacher should be able to guide as well as teach and should be expected to be a student of penology.

In the vocational guidance and training, the instructors



in these departments should be able to approximate the results obtained in any vocational school. They should be able to teach the beginner, instruct the advanced student, and understand the requirements of competition in their industry outside. They should be chosen for their knowledge and interest and not by some artificial criteria such as veteran's preference or political influence. While the fundamentals of many trades are now taught at the Reformatory, there is unlimited opportunity to introduce as many as the funds of the State will allow. The more courses that are offered, the more likelihood that the inmates will find something that will arouse their interests and create a desire to be respectable members of society. The trade courses should be arranged on the project plan and there should be supplementary theoretical courses given with every trade. A more direct contact and relationship between the academic and vocational courses with the library is desirable. At present, there is very little connection between educational work and the library. Instructors in the schools should know what books are on hand and should be able to add to them so that further research by the inmates can be promoted in this direction. While gifts of books by individuals and public institutions are welcome, it is necessary to have additional books of a more direct educational value. These are not usually given and so should be purchased by the Reformatory as the educational requirements demand.

The changing values of rehabilitative procedures, as





discovered by continuous investigations and research, demand that guards and instructors always keep abreast of these new understandings. It would be a wise development to reward these men for professional growth. They should be encouraged and perhaps even forced to take courses in penology and reformatory practices. They should at all times be aware of the great responsibility they have to society, and of the fundamental duties of their offices. The guard is in continuous daily contact with the prisoner. He is, because of this, the key man in society's attempt to alter the inmate's behavior patterns and to influence his attitudes. This officer's example is, perhaps, one of the most important factors in the difficult task of selling the inmates a new outlook for the conduct of their lives. The guard must be a leader. His duty is to enforce the rules of the institution and the manner in which he does this indicates his ability as a leader. If he can get things accomplished only by the use of threats, brutality and the like, he will accentuate the difference between himself and the inmate. A guard who can get things done and still command respect, has a better chance to influence prisoners to develop proper social attitudes and to abandon their anti-social ones. In the rehabilitation work, his cooperation is essential. He must be cognizant of the constructive values of the rehabilitation program so that he can interpret them to the inmates. Because of the guard's unique position, he can observe the individual characteristics of prisoners under



conditions which instructors, psychiatrists, parole officers, and other members of the staff have little opportunity to see. Therefore, he is a valuable link between these specialists and the inmate. If the guards are picked for their abilities alone, they would be able to report intelligently on the habits of those in their care and so help in formulating individual treatment programs that would be very valuable along with the classification diagnosis. Many of the guards at Concord at present are capable of this work, but there are also many who are unfitted on the staff, who have received their position through lax civil service requirements rather than for their interests and abilities in the work. All new men should be required to have at least a high school training and should be made to take courses in penology before being allowed to serve the State in this capacity.

The trade and academic instructors, needless to say, must be experienced in teaching, and must have a thorough knowledge of their particular work and its possibilities for the inmate upon his release. They must be sympathetic guidance counselors and have an understanding of the mental differences of their charges. Teaching and practical experience should be included in their civil service requirements. They also should be encouraged to understand rehabilitative procedures and should be rewarded for professional growth. Since these men have been in service at the Reformatory for many years, their experience takes the place of considerable



training. They should be encouraged, nevertheless, to familiarize themselves with all the latest methods, and should be rewarded for doing this.

### Parole and Society

Because the commission of serious crimes by paroled prisoners has been forcefully brought to the attention of the public by our newspapers, the question of parole procedure has been under attack in this State for the last few years. Some people have demanded the removal of members of the Parole Board and others have demanded the discarding of the whole system. The prisoners feel that the system is unfair, politicians try to control it, and society objects to it as jeopardizing its own safety. Some of these attitudes may be justified in individual cases where politics or misunderstandings have entered the situation. It would be an unfortunate retrogression, however, if the system was condemned for its comparatively few mistakes and done away with. The indeterminate sentence idea is a good one. It gives the boys new incentives for trying to conform, and forces them to change their habits for the better while on parole. The fundamental basis of parole is scientific;--case studies, behavior records, and educational abilities all playing a part in the decisions of the Board.

If recidivism is to be curbed, the Parole Board must be left free to handle its work without political interference of any sort. It must have more parole agents and field workers



for follow-up supervision. With only about fifteen parole agents to check up on the boys released, it is not hard to understand why they become involved in trouble again and have to be sent back to the Reformatory. Reporting to parole officers by letter, as it is done in Massachusetts at the present time, is a very poor method at best. There should be sufficient officers so that they can become personally acquainted and responsible for the guidance of the boys in their charge. Fifty cases are as many as any one parole officer should attempt to handle at one time. This improvement alone would have a decisive effect on the relapse habits of the boys.

The Parole Board of Massachusetts is usually blamed for all the failures of the parole system. Whenever boys are brought back for some offence against society, it is the Board that is held responsible. Usually an investigation will show that the failure of the boy was conditioned by factors under the control of the society he was in rather than by the actions of the Parole Board. Ordinarily when a boy is released, he is allowed to go only because the facts indicate that he is ready again to take his place in society. Once he has been released, society expects him to take his place among them without further assistance. In fact, he is left alone so much, that we might say he is ignored and shunned by that society, altogether. Very seldom will it help him to get settled or aid him in obtaining work. It is obvious that a prisoner just released from a reformatory and seeking work is





placed in a position of peculiar difficulty. It is very important that he should find work. The most elaborate combination of deterrent and reformatory influences must in many cases fail if, on discharge from prison, he finds it impossible or at least very difficult to obtain bread except by stealing. I have listened to many bitter stories of paroled prisoners who were returned to Concord. Some have tried conscientiously to secure even the most menial of jobs only to be rejected when forced to account for their past. Some have told me of securing positions only to lose them when their employers learned of their criminal records. The readjustment of the ex-prisoner to normal community life is clearly a crime-preventive measure and any assistance given to these boys is really another means of reducing crime. The importance of well-organized community effort in work with ex-prisoners has been woefully overlooked. Unless they can be placed in better environmental conditions than from which they were taken, only small percentages of them can be expected to remain outside of prison walls.

It is society's duty to see that these boys get every constructive and possible aid after their release. They should be furnished employment, given a proper community friendship, and have available, outlets for decent use of their leisure immediately after their return. The cost of crime to society in Massachusetts is close to one half billion dollars,-- certainly it would pay to set up agencies whose only duties



would be to guide and encourage those boys who are willing but unwanted members of the community. It is true that we do have one or two organizations of this sort in the State;--but either they do not contact enough of these men, or the men have lost confidence in them from past experiences. Society's responsibility in the rehabilitation program is to recognize the limitations of the institutions within the State;--vote adequate funds for their maintenance, see that they are well staffed, and be willing to help those whose pathways of life, until now, have crossed in directions out of line with the best interests of the community. Above all, it must remember that delinquency and crime spring from a wide variety and usually a multiplicity of interrelated causes and that delving into the roots of these takes time and patience. It must be slow to condemn and ever ready to aid both the penologist and the prisoner in the fight for a solution of this tremendous problem. It cannot be solved overnight by haphazard legislation or schemes born of ignorance. It involves some of the most fundamental weaknesses and prejudices of society and demand an attack that is continuous and scientific. It must be led by specialists and supported intelligently by all, if it is ever to reach the high goal of social adjustment that we all demand.

End



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